

IRTS Radio News Bulletin Sunday March 7th 2021

Peter Grant EI4HX Silent Key

We regret to announce the sudden death of Peter Grant EI4HX at his home in Dundalk, County Louth on Tuesday last, March 2nd. Peter, a native of County Down, was an ex- member and ex-officer of the Dundalk Amateur Radio Society and at national level was a committee member of the Irish Radio Transmitters Society for many years and served at various times as book sales manager and awards manager between 1997 and 2011. Peter was also active on VHF and UHF and on HF he was prominent in the Worked All Ireland Award Scheme. Peter was laid to rest on Saturday March 6th at Kilsaran cemetery. We extend our deepest sympathy to his wife Eileen and sons Joey and John and his extended family and friends.

HAREC Training Courses

Applications are still being accepted for the next HAREC on-line course starting on March 30th. The course will run on Tuesdays and Wednesdays for 8 weeks. The course is free for IRTS members and intending members and the closing date for applications is March 20th. Send expressions of interest to harectraining /at/ gmail.com.

IRTS Annual General Meeting

Due to the continuing and forecasted Covid-9 pandemic restrictions, the 2021 IRTS Annual General Meeting will be held online on the Zoom platform on Saturday April 24th at 1100. The annual committee report, financial report, committee nominations and formal notice of the AGM will be included in the upcoming spring edition of Echo Ireland. Also included will be details on how to arrange your attendance at the meeting on Zoom.

South Eastern Amateur Radio Group News Bulletins

The Tuesday evening broadcast of the IRTS radio news by Sean Byrne EI2HZB on behalf of the South Eastern Amateur Radio Society is getting great support from the amateur radio community all over the country and beyond. This bulletin is broadcast

on the Southern Ireland Repeater Network of voice repeaters on both the 2 metres and 70 centimetres bands and facilitates callers from as far away as Mayo and Cavan. The Zello app as well as Echolink are also used by callers from both Ireland and abroad. The number of callers has been increasing gradually over recent months and reached a record number of 68 on last weeks broadcast. Congratulations to newsreader Sean, his logging assistant Keith and all who call in to support the service and of course the repeaters providers of the Southern Ireland repeater network.

IARU Monitoring System

One of the roles of the International Amateur Radio Union is the monitoring of our bands for unauthorised users. The IARU Monitoring System in Region One was set up in 1972 and has a coordinator in many countries and we are very grateful to Michael EI3GYB who carries out this role for us in Ireland. Michael monitors the bands and sends a monthly report to the Region One coordinator who processes all the information submitted. These reports can be viewed on www.iaru-rl.org The primary objective of the IARU Monitoring System is the search, classification, identification and initiation of steps leading to the removal from amateur bands of radio signals of non-amateur stations causing harmful interference to the amateur services, contrary to International Telecommunications Union and national radio regulations. Typical intruders include Broadcasters, Over the Horizon Radars, illegal operators on the bands including taxicabs and fishermen on various bands, various military modes and many more types of unwanted signals. In his report for February, as well as the usual suspects, Michael details the following about a church radio. A church in the West of Ireland produced a lot of harmonics from 28390 to 28470 kHz and on several other frequencies due to a fault in the transmitter set up. The interference lasted from the 1st to the 8th of the month. The parish priest was made aware of the situation and advised to rectify the problems. The “Parish Radio” was silent for a couple of days and returned later without causing any more interference, broadcasting only on its own frequency. The problems seems to have been solved.

Help for CW Beginners

Newcomers to CW often have difficulty finding stations to work at slow speeds. To address that problem there is a small group of dedicated radio amateurs who regularly help beginners to take that 'Giant Leap' and use CW on air for the first time. They have a Facebook page ‘SLOW CW UK’ and invite members from all parts of the world to join them. For those interested in taking their first steps, into what might be referred to as the 'Dark Art' of CW communication, have a listen out around 3.555MHz plus or minus QRM most evenings from around 1930 to 2030z. The group

have specific activity nights on Wednesday and Saturday evenings but one or two of them can be found around those frequencies most evenings often calling "CW SLOW". These amateurs take some of the fear out of using Morse code on air for the first few times. So, if you feel you can copy CW at around 10 word per minute or more then answer their CQ calls or arrange a sked. Most of them are retired so daytime skeds can be arranged as well as evening ones.

International Space Station Schools QSO

Technical issues with the ISS radio prevented students at Wyoming's Newcastle High School hooking with the ISS in January but they finally made the promised QSO with ISS Commander Mike Hopkins KF5LJG thanks to the use of the Russian 2 metre station on board. During a January 27 spacewalk to install exterior cabling on the ISS Columbus module, the current coax feed line installed 11 years ago was replaced with another built by the European Space Agency (ESA) and Airbus. On reconnecting the radio equipment, the problem was discovered. ARISS chair Frank Bauer, KA3HDO, announced that efforts were under way to identify the issue that caused the radio to fail in January and a team is working with NASA and the European Space Agency on a solution.

On the Air next week

The Indonesian Yankee Bravo DX RTTY Contest takes place on Saturday next from midnight Friday for 24 hours. The exchange is report and serial number and the multipliers are YB prefixes and DXCC entities. The South America 10 metre contest runs for 24 hours from 1200 on Saturday next the 13th. on both CW and SSB. The exchange is report and CQ Zone and multipliers are CQ zones and South American prefixes. The Stew Perry Top Band Challenge starts at 1500 on Saturday next March 13th and finishes at 1500 on Sunday. The exchange is your four character grid square and a point is awarded for every 500 kilometres. The Echo Alpha PSK63 contest organised by the Spanish National Society URE runs for 24 hours from 1600 on Saturday March the 13th. The exchange for stations outside Spain is report and serial number.

Now some DX news: Hiro, JF1OCQ, is now active as 5W7X (remotely from Japan) from Samoa (OC-097). The length of his activity is not known. Activity will be on all HF bands. QSL via JF1OCQ. See QSL info on QRZ.com. Bodo, HB9EWU is QRV as 9J2BG while working on a humanitarian mission in the Luapula Province, Zambia. He is active in his spare time generally on 20 meters. QSL to home call. Paul, KA4WPX is QRV as V7/KA4WPX and V73AX from Kwajalein Atoll, the Marshall

Islands IOTA Oceania-028. Activity is at various times on 160 to 10 meters, and possibly 6 meters, using CW and SSB. QSL direct. Randy, WW6RG/KH9 announces he is returning to Wake Island, Oceania-053 and plans activity on the following days: March 21, March 26 and April 1, with limited activity. Check 20 or 17m SSB around 04:30z to 07:00z those days. He will use an IC-705 and an AlexLoop. QSL via home call.

Cork Radio Club Weekly Zoom meetings

Members of Cork Radio Club and guests meet weekly at 2030 on the Zoom platform after the 2 metre IRTS news broadcast by Vincent EI7HN on the Cork repeater. The link to the meeting is on the Club's Facebook page and visitors are always very welcome to join in.

That is the news for this week. Items for inclusion in next week's radio news can be submitted by email to newsteam/at/irts/dot/ie for automatic forwarding to both the radio and printed news services. The deadline is midnight on Thursday. Urgent late items for the news may be telephoned to News Editor Dave EI4BZ on 087-6290574

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